

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An image generation system comprising:

a memory which stores a program and data for image generating; and  
at least one processor which is connected to the memory and performs  
processing for image generating,

the processor performing:

depth cueing for an object such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color;

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

2. (Currently Amended) The image generation system as defined in claim 1,

the processor further performing:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

3. (Currently Amended) The image generation system as defined in claim 1,

the processor further performing:

depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and

varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

4. (Currently Amended) The image generation system as defined in claim 2,

the processor further performing:

depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and

varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

5. (Currently Amended) The image generation system as defined in claim 1,

the processor further performing:

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

6. (Currently Amended) The image generation system as defined in claim 2,

the processor further performing:

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

- 7-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) An image generation system comprising:

a memory which stores a program and data for image generating; and

at least one processor which is connected to the memory and performs processing for image generating.

the processor performing:

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn ~~sequentially in succession starting~~ from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable program embodied on an information storage medium or in a carrier wave, comprising a processing routine for implementing:

depth cueing for an object such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color;

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

12. (Currently Amended) The program as defined in claim 11, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

13. (Currently Amended) The program as defined in claim 11, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and

varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

14. (Currently Amended) The program as defined in claim 12, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and

varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

15. (Currently Amended) The program as defined in claim 11, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

16. (Currently Amended) The program as defined in claim 12, further comprising a processing routine for implementing:

varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and

varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

17-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A computer-usable program embodied on an information storage medium or in a carrier wave, comprising a processing routine for implementing:

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn ~~sequentially~~ in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

21. (New) An image generation method comprising:

depth cueing for an object such that the color of the object being more distant from a viewpoint is made closer to a target color;

varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of the object so that the object being more distant from the viewpoint becomes more transparent;

sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and

drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.

22. (New) The image generation method as defined in claim 21, further comprising:

drawing a most distant background including a color different from the target color.

23. (New) The image generation method as defined in claim 21, further comprising:  
depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and  
varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

24. (New) The image generation method as defined in claim 22, further comprising:  
depth cueing for the object on condition that the object is positioned within a given area; and  
varying the alpha value on condition that the object is positioned within a given area.

25. (New) The image generation method as defined in claim 21, further comprising:  
varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and  
varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

26. (New) The image generation method as defined in claim 22, further comprising:  
varying a depth cueing value for each vertex of the object based on a Z-value for each vertex of the object; and  
varying the alpha value for each vertex of the object based on the Z-value for each vertex of the object.

27. (New) An image generation method comprising:
- varying an alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value of an object depending on the distance between the object and the viewpoint;
  - sorting objects of which alpha values are varied so that the objects are drawn in succession starting from an object nearest to the viewpoint; and
  - drawing an image viewable from a virtual camera in an object space in drawing order determined by the sorting processing while performing hidden-surface erasing based on a Z-buffer process for the objects of which alpha values are varied.